

Blogging Lessons, Resources, and Ideas

Steps to determining your blogging lessons

1. Decide on a service- spend some time viewing the options and create your own blog to play around with the features.
2. Verify that this service can be accessed through the school.
3. Create a set of instructions for students to follow in setting up their blogs. Be clear about privacy.
4. Create a letter for parents explaining the value of blogging and how they can, and should, sign on and make comments.
5. Create a rubric or scoring guide for student writers stressing the importance of quality work.

These excellent handouts are provided at Bill Ferriter's site: <http://digitallyspeaking.pbworks.com>

[Teacher Tips for Blogging Projects](#)

[How to post an entry in Blogger](#)

[Teacher Checklist for Blogging Projects](#)

[Leaving Good Blog Comments](#)

[Blog Scoring Checklist](#)

Some Blogs to check out

<http://thefischbowl.blogspot.com>

<http://digitallyspeaking.pbworks.com>

<http://www.scientificamerican.com/blog/60-second-science/index.cfm>

<http://weblogg-ed.com/>

BLOG Services

Blog services provide an array of features to make blogging easier. You can typically edit, post, and archive your blogs as well as choose different templates for design. Most allow you to adjust the number of and ways to allow comments. Each of the services listed below are worth checking out. These are the most popular of blogging services used by teachers and students.

1. **Blogger** (<http://www.blogger.com>): Blogger is one of the most widely used blogging services. It is a Google product so you can be assured that it will be around for a while. You can also easily combine with other Google applications.
2. **Edublogs** (<http://edublogs.org>): Edublogs is another popular blog services for teachers and students because of its "school-friendly" feel. Currently over 400,000 educators are blogging through Edublog.
3. **Class Blogmeister** (<http://classblogmeister.com/>): Class Blogmeister is, perhaps, one of the most unique free blogging services available to teachers and students primarily because it makes blogging by students incredibly easy. On Blogmeister, teachers create a main page and enroll students as users who can post selections to the classroom blog automatically. This eliminates the need for students to have their own accounts or blogs—something that many teachers and parents are uncomfortable with.

Blogging Quick and Easy Glossary

Blogger	the author of a blog also blogger.com a popular free blog hosting service.
Blogroll	a list of links to other blogs that a blogger reads, or recommends.
Blogosphere	all blogs in the world, or the blogging community at large.
Collaborative blog	a blog generally focused on one topic such as marketing. Multiple users collaborate on the directions of the blog and are all allowed to contribute posts.
Comments	most blogs give its readers a way to comment on what is written; can be disabled by the blogger
Comment spam	much like email spam, comment spammers comment on posts with advertising or with links to a site they are using for advertising to obtain backlinks
Permalink	short for Permanent link this is the permanent unique URL of a single post
Photoblog	a blog mostly containing photos, posted constantly and chronologically
Podcasting	a mixing of the words “iPod” and “broadcasting” but available for more than iPods. Posting audio or video material on a blog and its RSS feed, for digital download by digital music players.
Post	an entry, usually dated, written and published to a blog. Posts are similar to a webpage and are generally displayed in reverse chronological order.
RSS	(stands for “Really Simple Syndication”) works by retrieving the latest content from blogs and sites you are interested in and bringing them to one location where you can easily read
RSS feed	an XML file containing a blog’s latest posts. It is read by an RSS aggregator or reader and shows whenever a blog has been updated. A feed usually shows the title of the post, the title plus an excerpt of the post, or the entire post
Subscribe	the term used describe a visitor adding a blog feed to a feed reader so a visitor can be notified by email when a new post is available.
Thread	a term used to describe a series of comments that relate to a specific post.
Troll	a blogger who has a reputation for adding obnoxious comments to blogs is referred to as a Troll.

Tips for Leaving a Good Blog Comment:

The best blogs are truly interactive—with users listening and responding to one another. They are super interesting digital conversations! Highly accomplished commenters are constantly thinking while interacting with others who are leaving comments. They come to the conversation with an open mind, willing to reconsider their own positions—and willing to challenge the notions of others.

Blog commenting requires users to develop the skills that active thinkers bring to any learning experience. The following tips for blog commenters are adapted from the collective work of Kelly Gallagher, Matt Copeland and Project CRISS:

To be an active blog commenter, start by carefully reading the original post and then working your way through the comments that have been left by others. While viewing the comments that have been added by other users, you should:

Gather facts: Jot down things that are interesting and new to you.

Make Connections: Relate and compare things you are hearing to things you already know

Ask Questions: What about the comments that have already been made is confusing to you? What don't you understand? How will you find the answer? Remember that there will ALWAYS be questions in an active thinker's mind.

Give Opinions: Make judgments about what you are viewing and hearing. Do you agree? Do you disagree? Like? Dislike? Do you support or oppose anything that you have heard or seen? Why?

Use the following sentence starters to shape your thoughts and comments while viewing or participating in blog conversations. Comments based on these kinds of statements make blog conversations interactive and engaging.

- This reminds me of...
- This is similar to...
- I wonder...
- I realized...
- I noticed...
- You can relate this to...
- I'd like to know...
- I'm surprised that...
- If I were _____, I would _____
- If _____ then _____
- Although it seems...
- I'm not sure that...

While commenting, try to respond directly to other readers. Begin by quoting some part of the comment that you are responding to. That will help other readers know what it is that has caught your attention. Then, explain your own thinking in a few short sentences. Elaboration is important when you're trying to make a point. Finally, finish your comment with a question that other listeners can reply to.

Here's a sample of a great blog comment made on a post about the reasons that nations fight one another:

Boston Coffee posed a wonderful question: "Do adults hate more than children do?"

I think that we all hate the same but the hate starts with parents, teachers and others in authority. It's really hard not to adapt to what everyone else is thinking or doing. Hate is a strong feeling towards a certain person because they're different.

Which poses another question for me. Do you think that people who hate are afraid of difference or change?

When responding to another reader, don't be afraid to disagree with something that they have said. Challenging the thinking of another reader will help them to reconsider their own thinking—and will force you to explain yours! Just be sure to disagree agreeably—impolite people are rarely influential.

If your thinking gets challenged by another reader in a blog conversation, don't be offended. Listen to your peers, consider their positions and decide whether or not you agree with them. You might discover that they've got good ideas you hadn't thought about. Either way, be sure to respond—let your challengers know how their ideas have influenced you.

<u>Blog Reading/Commenting Dos:</u>	<u>Blog Reading/Commenting Don'ts:</u>
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Visit our class Pageflake at: http://tinyurl.com/2mgl552. Hover over interesting links to see a short description of each article.3. Read a few bits that catch your eye!4. Leave a well-written, thoughtful comment that challenges the author, shares your thinking, and/or asks a good question! (Write in Word first, and then paste your comment.)5. Visit again at a later date to see if anyone has responded to your thoughts.6. Be Polite! No one likes a rude visitor.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. NEVER USE YOUR REAL NAME OR THE NAME OF YOUR SCHOOL! Remaining anonymous is the safest way to add comments to blogs.2. Ever respond to anyone who says something mean or inappropriate. Always find your teacher if this happens!3. Forget to proofread your posts. Tons of errors will make people think that you don't know what you're talking about.4. Be afraid to challenge the thinking of other people! Some of the best learning happens when people are forced to rethink their ideas.